

Life Group Notes 6/16/2024
Pastor Mark Warren Fathers' Day

[No doctrine is a given unless it has been found in the Word given by the Holy Spirit and received by you. If you have observations or questions, feel free to send me an email with your comment or observations at tbeachhead@comcast.net. Thank you for taking the time—Pete Mehegan, the Scribe.]

Remember: Be good to one another. Be sensitive and kind. Let God heal our hearts...and guide our discussions. **PLEASE PRE-READ THESE NOTES AND CHOOSE THE DIRECTION THAT IS APPROPRIATE FOR YOUR GROUP.** BE COGNIZANT OF YOUR GROUP'S TIME AND BE SENSITIVE! **Some groups would like to dwell on a single idea. Let the Spirit be your guide. Never feel obligated to complete this study.**

Note: I have highlighted suggested discussion questions that Pastor Mark has raised this week, 6/16. Let's allow the Holy Spirit to guide all our discussions, using the highlights as trail blazes. **The purpose is to minister to one another.** I include each of the passages mentioned in full, to facilitate the enjoyment of these notes. Footnotes are not meant to distract. This week's footnotes include:

1. [On Malachi, and fathers.](#)

*****Important:** At the very [end of these notes](#), I've included passages that were mentioned in this week's message for deeper study using SOAP journaling to help further your study during the week. ***

What's your best "Dad joke?" Take a moment to talk about fathers you have known and their impact.

1. How are fathers portrayed in today's entertainment media?
2. What are the best examples? What is the worst you've seen?
3. What impact do good fathers have in society?
4. What impact does fatherlessness have?
5. Do you remember how fatherhood was portrayed by the sitcoms entering into the sixties? (Think *Leave it to Beaver*, *Ozzie and Harriet*, *Father Knows Best* and *Bonanza*.) How did that change in the seventies and beyond? (Think *All in the Family*, *Married with Children*, *Malcom in the Middle*, *Family Guy* and *The Simpsons*.) What changed? Is this a reflection of society?
6. Could it also be a catalyst to influence society? (Note: Be careful and gentle here.)

Take a close look at the Lord's prayer: Matthew 6: [9](#)In this manner, therefore, pray:
Our Father in heaven,
Hallowed be Your name.
[10](#)Your kingdom come.
Your will be done
On earth as *it is* in heaven.
[11](#)Give us this day our daily bread.

[12](#)And forgive us our debts,
As we forgive our debtors.

[13](#)And do not lead us into temptation,
But deliver us from the evil one.

For Yours is the kingdom and the power and the glory forever. Amen. [14](#)“For if you forgive men their trespasses, your heavenly Father will also forgive you. [15](#)But if you do not forgive men their trespasses, neither will your Father forgive your trespasses. (NKJ)

1. What do you see? To whom is this prayer addressed?
2. Why?
3. When Jesus starts by addressing God as “Father,” what is the significance?
4. Why “our” Father? What relationships are enforced here? Between whom?
5. What choice do we have, when it comes to personal family ties?

Pastor Mark begins by saying, “I truly believe your dad did the best he could do. He might have been incapable. He might have been ‘not present,’ but I find that, looking at fathers’ lives, a lot of time the complexity of their own lives, as they tried working through their own hurts and pains yet still trying to do what is good... their resulting efforts were never quite good enough.”

1. How do you respond to this?
2. Speaking to those who feel like they did not have the father they needed, Mark encourages us to “...release our dads...Allow yourself to think that they truly tried to do their best.” Is this possible?
3. Look at verses 14 and 15 above. What is the clear benefit of forgiving and extending grace? What do you get for it?

Pastor Mark continues, “When you ask the question, ‘How could they...?’ The answer is, ‘They were just trying to get through life themselves.’”

1. Does this help?
2. Do you have coping tools that your father never had? Can you point to any?
3. Mark suggests, “People who struggle with the image of a ‘Father God,’ struggle because of the difficulties they had with their earthly fathers. They don’t understand what a healthy father figure looks like.” Discuss this.
4. If you want your children to see the Father in Heaven for who He is, what do you need to do?
5. How do you model Him? How do you imitate Him?

Pastor listed the names of God from the Old Testament.

1. Without looking at your notes, how many can you list?
2. Look at the list:
 - a. *Elohim*. First appears in Genesis 1:1. This form is, not insignificantly, the plural of the word *El*, a title meaning “judge, lord, god.” When used in the plural, exclusively for the Father, God, it highlights His majesty, and his supreme and singular Lordship over all other judges, lords and gods. “He does not *need* our worship, but He, above all else, is worthy of our worship, and receives it as a father would receive the willingly open arms of his own child.”

- b. *Adonai*. This is Hebrew for Lord, also a title. It is the master, the ruler. You come to Him knowing He is not shaken. He is in control.
- c. *El Shaddai*. This is often translated, “God almighty.” Although the translation is difficult, this is used 48 times in the Old Testament, and each time it is associated with provision, life and overwhelming power. (Scribe’s note: One of the possible and defensible translations refers to the nurturing breasts of the mother in terms of sustenance and nourishment.) Pastor Mark speaks to the promise in this name of God’s power to sustain us throughout all our circumstances. He is almighty, the power over it all.
- d. *El Elyon*. This title is translated “God of gods,” the supreme authority. He is the most High God, master and ruler.
- e. *El Olam*. This means “the God of Forever, the Everlasting God.” He precedes all things and proceeds through all ages, preeminent in all. This is the promise of a relationship with all eternity.
- f. *Jehovah Jireh*. “YHWH will provide,” the name first used by Abraham on Mt. Moriah when God provided a ram as substitute for Isaac as Abraham had prophesied to Isaac as they mounted the slopes of the hill. Abraham said, “God will provide.” God is the promise of our provision.
- g. *Jehovah Rapha*. God who heals. Look up Exodus 15: [23](#) Now when they came to Marah, they could not drink the waters of Marah, for they were bitter. Therefore the name of it was called Marah. [24](#) And the people complained against Moses, saying, “What shall we drink?” [25](#) So he cried out to the Lord, and the Lord showed him a tree. When he cast *it* into the waters, the waters were made sweet. There He made a statute and an ordinance for them, and there He tested them, [26](#) and said, “If you diligently heed the voice of the Lord your God and do what is right in His sight, give ear to His commandments and keep all His statutes, I will put none of the diseases on you which I have brought on the Egyptians. For I *am* the Lord who heals you. (*YHWH Rapha*)” God gave Himself the name in a promise.
- h. *Jehovah Nissi*. “YHWH is my banner” was the name of God first used by Moses in Exodus 17 when God routed the Amalekites as Moses stood with hands upraised at the top of the hill with Aaron and Hur’s support. God had told him to write down the memory for all time. God Himself is the promise of our enemies’ defeat.
- i. *Jehovah Shalom*. From Judges 6: [22](#) Now Gideon perceived that He was the Angel of the Lord. So Gideon said, “Alas, O Lord God! For I have seen the Angel of the Lord face to face.” [23](#) Then the Lord said to him, “Peace be with you; do not fear, you shall not die.” [24](#) So Gideon built an altar there to the Lord, and called it *The-Lord-Is-Peace* (*YHWH Shalom*). To this day it is still in Ophrah of the Abiezrites. This is the name of the memorial altar that Gideon built to remember God’s promise of peace to Him, because peace flows from the promise.

- j. *Jehovah Tsidkenu*. God [is] our righteousness. Jeremiah prophesied the name over Israel in Jeremiah 23: [5](#)“Behold, the days are coming,” says the Lord, “That I will raise to David a Branch of righteousness; A King shall reign and prosper, And execute judgment and righteousness in the earth. [6](#)In His days Judah will be saved, And Israel will dwell safely; Now this is His name by which He will be called: THE LORD OUR RIGHTEOUSNESS. This is the new covenant promise of that righteousness that comes by faith, not based on our works, but based solely on our faith in His promise, that His righteousness would be imputed unto us by the faith of Jesus Christ.
 - k. *Jehovah Sabaoth*. Used 284 times in some form in the Old Testament, this is a military term meaning “The Lord of Hosts/Supreme Commander.” He is the God in command of all the armies of heaven. Full military strength is ascribed to Him in this name. This is God, your Father Who will do this for you. He is awesome and powerful; He is also present. He is your peace.
 - l. *Jehovah Shammah*. “The Lord is present/here.” This is the name given by Ezekiel to the New Jerusalem, the Holy City, in Ezekiel 48:[35](#)All the way around *shall be* eighteen thousand cubits; and the name of the city from *that day shall be*: THE LORD IS THERE.” It speaks of His ever-abiding presence, as Jesus promised in Matthew 28, “I will never leave you or forsake you.”
 - m. *El Roi*. “The God Who Sees Me.” This is the name given by Hagar, the mother of Ishmael in Genesis 16, who, when Abraham and Sarah had cast her out, God came to comfort her. She gave Him this name.
3. What do you see?
 4. How can we put these characteristics on display for our children? Are there real, practical steps we can take?
 5. Pastor says, “I want you to leave here with confidence, saying, ‘I know the character of my Father in Heaven.’” What do you see?
He continues, “I want my children to be proud to call me, ‘Dad.’”
 1. Think about this for a minute: What helps strengthen this hope? What actions can a father take?
 2. What hinders this hope? What should be avoided?
 3. What can you do now? Go over the list as pastor did, and reflect on what can be done. (Ladies help the men. How can men step up? What should they avoid?)
 4. What expectations can be met? What expectations are unrealistic?
 5. What help do we need from the Holy Spirit?
- Look up Psalm 68: [4](#)*Sing to God! Sing praises to His name. Exalt Him who rides on the clouds—His name is the LORD—and rejoice before Him.* [5](#)*A father of the fatherless, and a defender of the widows, is God in His holy habitation.* [6](#)*God settles the lonely in families; He leads the prisoners out to prosperity, but the rebellious dwell in a sun-scorched land.*
1. What is the nature of this promise?
 2. Have you seen it in your life? Do you have a testimony?
 3. Compare this Psalm to what Malachi says below in [footnote 1](#). What do you see?

4. Look at what James says: [1:27 Pure and undefiled religion before our God and Father is this: to care for orphans and widows in their distress, and to keep oneself from being polluted by the world.](#) How does this fit? How can fathers extend their “fatherhood”? To whom?
5. If you have been harmed by your father, what steps do you need to take?
6. If you have done harm, what steps do you need to take?
7. Take time to pray. Let the Father’s Spirit lead the prayer.

The Follow-up Application

1. Use the [SOAP journal studies](#) below throughout the week.
2. List aspects of the Father God.
3. List steps that will help your children see the Father in Heaven for Who He is.
4. Take one step this week.

Take the time to pray.

Scribe’s Notes:

1. **On Malachi and fathers**—The prophet Malachi has a promise that it is appropriate to remember: Take a close look at Malachi 4: [1](#) “For behold, the day is coming, burning like a furnace, when all the arrogant and every evildoer will be stubble; the day is coming when I will set them ablaze,” says the LORD of Hosts. “Not a root or branch will be left to them.” [2](#) “But for you who fear My name, the sun of righteousness will rise with healing in its wings, and you will go out and leap, like calves from the stall. [3](#) Then you will trample the wicked, for they will be ashes under the soles of your feet on the day I am preparing,” says the LORD of Hosts. [4](#) “Remember the law of My servant Moses, the statutes and ordinances I commanded him for all Israel at Horeb. [5](#) Behold, I will send you Elijah the prophet before the coming of the great and awesome Day of the LORD. [6](#) And he will turn the hearts of the fathers to their children, and the hearts of the children to their fathers. Otherwise, I will come and strike the land with a curse.”
 - a. What do you see? What stands out?
 - b. Who becomes stubble? What do they look like? What do they do?
 - c. What characteristics describe the white hats?
 - d. What does the “sun of righteousness” look like? What comes with it?
 - e. Who takes care of the wicked? What have they already become?
(See verse 1 again.)
 - f. Who comes first, before the day happens?
 - g. What does he do? Why is that vital?
 - h. What brings a curse to the land?
 - i. Look at the commandment, Exodus 20: [12](#) [Honor your father and mother, so that your days may be long in the land that the LORD your God is giving you.](#) What choices does this commandment give you?
 - j. What is the reward of obedience?

For further study:

Take a moment each day this week to apply the **SOAP**... (**S**cripture—Copy the scripture. / **O**bservation—Write what you see. / **A**pplication—What is God saying? / **P**ray—What is your response?) ...method to some of the scripture we looked at this week:

Monday: Malachi 4:1-3
Tuesday: Malachi 4:4-6
Wednesday: Matthew 6:7-8
Thursday: Psalm 68:4-6
Friday: Matthew 6:14-15
Saturday: Exodus 15:23-26
Sunday: Exodus 17:8-16

Once again, some passages suggested here have more than the usual number of verses. This is not to increase the burden but to provide clarity of context. Pick the verses that speak to you most clearly, and run these through the SOAP steps.